

# THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR  
CONGRESS ST. UMC

## KNOWING OUR NEIGHBORS

WITH PASTOR RYAN

One morning at the end of January, I left my dead end street and drove about 100 yards and realized something was very different in my neighborhood. Police cars were all over and had Union Street closed to all traffic. It didn't take long to find out that someone had been shot and killed in a home not far at all from my home. In fact, I've walked or driven past this home at least once a day for the last three and a half years. I have no idea who lived there.

Initial response to a crime like this is to worry about ourselves and our own safety, but my follow up response was to wonder why I didn't know my neighbors. Often I've heard people bemoan the idea that Lafayette is getting to be a "big city", that crime is rising, that there is a "criminal element". I'm not saying knowing my neighbors would have stopped a crime. But I don't think crimes like this are welcome in the Kingdom of God. My question is, what are we doing to promote the Kingdom of God in our neighborhoods? When someone we don't know moves into our neighborhood, are we being Christlike in our welcome? May you get to know a neighbor this month, see where God is moving in their life, and who knows what good it could do.

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## RETURNING TO WORSHIP

As the COVID-19 infection rates continue to improve and the vaccine becomes more available, we are happy to welcome anyone who wishes to return to in-person worship back into the sanctuary. Masks and social distancing will still be required!

# ASH WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17TH, 2021

This year we will do something a little different on Ash Wednesday. We will host a drive-thru Ash Wednesday at Congress St. UMC from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.

We are doing this in partnership with Brown St. UMC, Grace UMC, and Trinity UMC.

You are welcome to drive into the church parking lot, pull up to receive your ashes and a devotional for Lent, and share any prayer concerns you may have.

All are welcome!



*"Well, anyhow, it preserves us from the pride of thinking that we invented sin ourselves by our originality, that famous modern power. In fact, we have it from the beginning of the world by the errors of being born being young, being old, causing pain to ourselves, to others, to the world, to God by ignorance, by knowledge, by intention, by accident. Something is bad the matter here, informing us of itself, handing down its old instruction. We know it when we see it, don't we? Innocence would never recognize it. We need it too, for without it we would not know forgiveness, goodness, gratitude, that fund of grace by which alone we live."*

*\_Wendell Berry*

*Original Sin*

## FOOD PANTRY

The Tippecanoe County United Food Pantry is still operating. Last month our church helped distribute food items - 60 families picked up food as we distributed to them outside. Our volunteers also helped unload and bag food items.

Thank you Volunteers!!

Now, in February our church has the opportunity to help again by donating money. Make checks payable to Congress St. U.M.C. with the notation that the money is to go to "Tippecanoe County United Food Pantry. Thank You - Ellen Barker

# HOLY VESSELS

A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

## LENT AT CONGRESS ST.

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered our sense of wholeness-

body, mind, and spirit-like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten "season of recovery" for our physical, communal, mental, intellectual, and environmental health, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken.

**Sunday mornings:  
February 21 - March 28**

# February Birthdays

Cree Nelson - 1st  
Howard Lumley - 5th  
Kathy Shea - 6th  
Jane Sulanke - 7th  
Del Grater - 13th  
Bob Barker - 18th  
Janet Handy - 25th  
Darlene DeLuca - 28th



## LENTEN STUDIES

In the season of Lent, Pastor Ryan and Pastor Rachel will be offering two different opportunities to connect and move deeper in your discipleship.

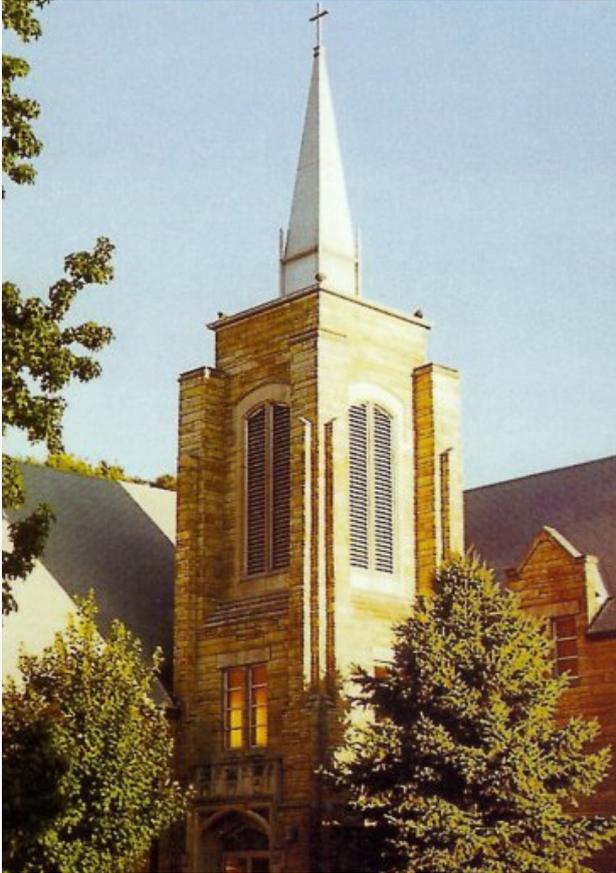
Pastor Rachel's  
Discussion Group  
Wednesdays at 6  
via Zoom, starting 2.24.21

ALL are welcome to  
discuss the weekly  
worship themes in  
this Zoom  
discussion group.  
Email Pastor Rachel for  
the Zoom link  
[rmetheny@cosumc.org](mailto:rmetheny@cosumc.org)

**PASTOR RYAN'S  
MEN'S BIBLE STUDY  
WEDNESDAYS AT 6  
AT BROWN ST. UMC  
STARTING 2.24.21**

**THIS IS A GROUP FOR MEN  
FROM OUR CHURCHES  
AND COMMUNITY TO  
GATHER AND DISCUSS LIFE  
AND SCRIPTURE.**

Get Connected. Stay connected.



#### OUR STAFF

Rev. Dr. Rachel Metheny -  
Senior Pastor

Pastor Ryan Traeger -  
Community Pastor

Crys Bazan -  
Minister of Music

#### Contact Us

2010 Congress Street  
Lafayette, IN 47905  
765-447-4158  
[www.cosumc.org/contact](http://www.cosumc.org/contact)

#### **Connect During the Week**

Sunday Worship:

Join us on Facebook Live

[www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers](http://www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers)

**If you're interested or able to receive this newsletter via email,  
please let Pastor Ryan know by emailing him at  
[rwtraeger@gmail.com](mailto:rwtraeger@gmail.com)**

Congress St. UMC  
2010 Congress St.  
Lafayette, IN 47905